TWO

THE TERATOGENIC GRID

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This goal is, briefly, to grasp the native's point of view, his relation to life, to realise *his* vision of *his* world.
(Bronislaw Malinowski, *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*)

IN CONTEMPORARY Western society, we base our division of sexual categories on the axis of same versus other. Our primary division rests on the genders of the people involved. Thus we have two large-scale emic[1] categories of individuals: heterosexuals, who have sex with persons of the opposite gender, and homosexuals, who have sex with persons of the same gender.

This categorization is a rather parochial affair and a comparatively recent development even in the culture of the West.[2] It is abundantly clear from the anthropological record that this feature simply is not used in numerous other cultures. In such other cultures, sexual categories are based on divisions of age, social status, ritual category, or power relations and often cut across or simply ignore the biological classes of male and female.[3] Not only are lines drawn in different places, but more than two *genders* are recognized by various cultures.[4] Our hetero- versus homo-categories make no sense in a culture where one has more than two choices.

The ancient world, both Greek and Roman, did not base its classification on gender, but on a completely different axis, that of active versus passive.[5] This has one immediate and important consequence, which we must face at the beginning. Simply put, there was no such emic, cultural abstraction as "homosexuality" in the ancient world. The fact that a man had sex with other men did not determine his sexual category. Equally, it must be emphasized, there was no such concept as "heterosexuality." The application of these terms to the ancient world is anachronistic and can lead to serious misunderstanding. By the fifth time one has made the qualification, "The passive homosexual was not rejected for his homosexuality but for his passivity,"[6] it ought to become clear that we are talking not about "homosexuality," but about passivity.

It is very difficult for us to ignore our own prejudices and realize that what may be literally a matter of life and death in our culture would have been a matter of indifference or bewilderment to the Romans (see below).[7] But anthropological data shows that active versus passive as a basis for determining sexual categories is paralleled in a wide variety of societies.[8] Outside our own system of cultural types, "homosexual" applies meaningfully only to acts, not to people; it is an adjective, not a noun.[9] Even then we must add the warning that the adjective may serve to gather together acts of significance only to our culture.[10] We all recognize that different societies have totally different lines from ours that divide sacred and secular, edible and inedible, kin and non-kin. We are willing to believe that the Romans inhabited a different physical world, a different spiritual world, a different psychological world. We must be willing to accept that they inhabited a different sexual world as well.[11]

The Grid

Roman sexuality was a structuralist's dream. The Romans divided sexual categories for people and acts on the axis of "active" and "passive." Active has, in their scheme, a single precise meaning. The one normative action is the penetration of a bodily orifice by a penis. There are other acts that the Romans thought of as sexual (kissing, fondling, biting, hitting), but they do not determine sexual personas.[12] The Roman sexual schema is rigidly phallocentric, and this is a fact rooted in nature (cf. Mart. 11.22.9–10; Hallett 1983: 108). Thus "active" is *by definition* "male" and "passive" is *by definition* "female." Accordingly, Roman society creates exactly four sexual categories for people. There is the normal/active male (*vir*) and the normal/passive female (*femina/puella*). Each then has its antitype: the passive/abnormal man (*cinaedus*) and the active/abnormal woman (*virago/tribas/moecha*).

The sexual acts that determine a sexual persona are also divided into active and passive. This distinction of voice forms the principal axis of the grid. I have drawn it as a vertical, since it is literally the case that what is active is deemed superior (male); what is passive is deemed inferior (female).

Crossing this vertical axis is a horizontal axis of three holes (vagina, anus, mouth). The model for this axis is the female body, and the grid is encoded in the very language itself. Latin has a single verb for each sexual determinative act: *futuere*, "to insert one's penis in someone's vagina"; *pedicare*, "to insert one's penis in someone's anus"; and *irrumare*, "to insert one's penis in someone's mouth." The entire vocabulary is purely anatomical and quite precise about what is going where, as outlined in

The Grid

	Orifice		
	Vagina	Anus	Mouth
Active			
Activity	*futuere*	*pedicare*	*irrumare*
Person (VIR)	{ *fututor*	*pedicator/pedico*	*irrumator*
Passive			
Activity	*futui*	*pedicari*	*irrumari/fellari*
Person			
Male (PATHICUS)	{ *cunnilinctor*	*cinaedus/pathicus*	*fellator*
Female (FEMINA)	{ *femina/puella*	*pathica*	*fellatrix*

the accompanying table. The grid allows exactly six slots. There is the *vir*, the normal/active/male, who has open to him three possible sexual activities: to fuck someone in the vagina, the anus, or the mouth. He can be a *fututor* (vaginal inserter), a *pedicator/pedico* (anal inserter), or an *irrumator* (oral inserter). Accordingly, a *pedicator* is *not* a "homosexual"; he's a "bugger": someone who likes fucking people—of either gender—up the ass. An *irrumator* is *not* a "homosexual"; he's something we don't have a word for: a man who prefers fucking—both women and men—in the mouth. Nor is a *fututor* our "heterosexual." A *vir* while practicing *fututio* (vaginal insertion) must, of course, use women, but the Romans assumed that he would enjoy other orifices at other times in other genders.

The opposite of the *vir* is the *femina*. However, the Roman writers reserve a special term for a woman in her sexual role, and this is *puella*, which denotes not merely youth or beauty, but the specific status of "sexual object."[13] As the opposite of *vir*, the *puella* or *femina* (i.e., the normal/passive female) has open to her exactly three possible sexual passivities: to be fucked in the vagina, the anus, or the mouth. She can be a *fututa* (vaginal insertee), a *pathica/pedicata* (anal insertee), or a *fellatrix/irrumata* (oral insertee). The fact that there is no separate noun corresponding to *fututa* is in itself significant: the word for a woman who is fucked vaginally is simply *femina/puella*. A woman is defined as "one who is fucked in the vagina."

Anomalous Acts

By the very act of classification, any cultural system not only defines "normal" and "abnormal," but also creates anomalies that are perceived as monstrous because they cross the boundaries of defined categories (Douglas [1966] 1984; Murray 1983). Let us then look first at the horizontal

division: the distinction between active and passive. The active is necessarily and essentially male: penetrating with one's penis. To be passive, therefore, is to play the part of a woman. This is amply attested by the phrase *pati muliebria*, "to suffer/be passive in the woman's role," and the overtones of the word *patior*, "to suffer, to allow, to be passive." Seneca said it best (*Ep.* 95.21): women are *pati natae*, "born to suffer," that is, made to be fucked (cf. Val. Max. 9.1.8). But the phrase is also frequently used of abnormal men, that is, men who allow themselves to be sexually passive.[14]

A woman cannot be properly active at all, since she has no penis. A woman cannot (in the Roman scheme of things) fuck a man.[15] Yet the very act of taking male/active sex as normative and the identification of the "active" with the "good" creates an anomaly at the very heart of the system, since it forces the identification of even the "normal" woman with the passive, the pathic, the bad (Richlin 1992a: 174). Female sexual *activity*, then, is by definition abnormal, almost an oxymoron. The sexually active woman is a monster.

Further, the vertical axis of the three holes creates its own anomalies. First, while the anus and vagina are thought of primarily as passive (mere receptacles for action), the mouth is problematic, a difficulty of conceptualization again shown in the language itself. Passive oral sex (*irrumari*) has the active counterpart of sucking (*fellare*, Adams 1982: 130–34). Thus, for the Romans, oral intercourse crosses classificatory boundaries. Disturbingly, it is both active and passive. Oral sex, however greatly desired, is already constructed as an anomalous activity.

Since the basis of the horizontal axis is the female body, a more significant gap is left when the system is inscribed on the male body. The grid is not symmetrical: only women have vaginas. Whereas a man can practice *pedicatio* or *irrumatio* on men and women alike, he can commit *fututio* only with women. What, then, happens when a man is passive?

Martial and the Logic Problem

We can see the poet Martial exploiting his culture's communal grid with the relentlessness of a logic problem. So 2.47 makes explicit the three possible active roles for a man:

> I warn you, flee the tricky nets of the infamous adulteress,
> Gallus, o you who are smoother than a Cytherian conch shell.
> Do you trust in your buttocks? The husband is not a butt-fucker (*paedico*).
> There are two things he does: mouth-fucks (*irrumat*) or cunt-fucks (*futuit*).

The significantly named Gallus hopes to avoid death or castration at the hands of a jealous husband by submitting to one of the standard punish-

ments for adultery: anal rape.[16] The husband, however, is not interested in anal sex (again, the word *pedico* does not specify the sex of the victim). Gallus lacks a vagina. One orifice is left. It logically follows that Gallus is going to be raped in the mouth (a worse punishment; cf. Mart. 3.83, and see below). Similarly, 3.73:

> You sleep with well-endowed boys
> and what stands on them does not stand on you.
> What, I ask you, do you want me to suspect?
> I wanted to believe that you were a soft man (*mollem*),
> but rumor denies that you are a *cinaedus*.

Gallus is *mollis* "soft," that is, passive: this eliminates the top three cells of the grid. He sleeps with boys: this eliminates the first column; he isn't a *cinaedus*: this eliminates the second column; all that remains is to conclude that he is a *fellator*: Q.E.D.

The gap in the system is shown by the deductive puzzler of 2.28:

> Laugh aloud at the one who called you, Sextillus,
> a *cinaedus* and stick out your middle finger.
> But you are not a butt-fucker (*pedico*), nor are you, Sextillus,
> a cunt-fucker (*fututor*).
> Nor does the hot cheek of Vetustina please you.
> I confess you are none of these things. So what are you?
> I don't know, but you know there are two things remaining.

The grid allots only six slots. Sextillus is not a *cinaedus* (anus/passive), nor a *pedico* (anus/active), nor a *fututor* (vagina/active), nor an *irrumator* (mouth/active). There are only two things left: he must be a *fellator* (mouth/passive) or . . . or what? A man may be used anally (*cinaedus*), and orally (*fellator*), but how can a man be used vaginally? The answer is clear from numerous other sources: he must be a *cunnilinctor* (Richlin 1992a: 132). Thus the logic of the system demands that cunnilingus is viewed somehow as being the passive/negative side of vaginal intercourse. To be passive with respect to the mouth is to be a *fellator*, to be passive with respect to the anus is to be a *cinaedus*, to be passive with respect to the vagina is to be a *cunnilinctor*. For a man to commit cunnilingus is to be fucked by a woman.

The Ontological Status of Cunnilingus

This is, for us, a highly counterintuitive statement; but it is clear from the Roman sources that cunnilingus is viewed as a man being used by a woman and corresponds to a man being used vaginally.[17] The passive man is "fucked" by a woman. Cunnilingus, as about the only sexual act in the

Roman schema where a man can be passive (i.e., nonpenetrating) with a woman, becomes the testing ground for whether *cinaedus* matches up with our concept of "homosexual." It is clear that it does not. In cunnilingus we have men engaged in sexual activities with women, which violates our very definition of "homosexual," but still being passive. In the Roman sexual system, the dividing line is active versus passive (penetrated versus penetrating), not same versus other. Thus, for a man to give oral sex is for him to be passive with respect to his mouth, and the disgrace is the same whether he is servicing a man or a woman (Veyne 1985: 31). Cunnilingus, like fellatio, is an oral violation, and the two are frequently lumped together, as in the logic of Martial 2.28 above (cf. also 3.81; 12.59.10). So Martial asks the rhetorical question (3.88):

> The brothers are twins but they tongue different groins.
> Tell me, are they more unlike or alike?

Men who perform fellatio are expected to perform cunnilingus as well. Just as the active male is indifferent to the gender of the person he violates, so the (orally) passive male is indifferent to the gender of the person who violates him. So in Ausonius *Epigrams* 78, where raging oral lust in a married *fellator* drives him to the perverted extremity of cunnilingus with his own wife.

Thus, cunnilingus is a monstrosity in the system. It is active, a type of failed intercourse (Mart. 3.81, 3.84, 11.25, 11.61), but also passive; note Martial's outrage in 11.61, where he attacks a man so passive that his mouth becomes a cunt for a cunt. Cunnilingus is passive, and so in the Roman system an essentially feminine activity. This can be seen clearly in Martial 7.67 (1–3, 13–17), where Philaenis misunderstands the categories of the grid (Richlin 1992a: 134; Hallett 1989a: 215–16):

> Philaenis the tribad (*tribas*) butt-fucks (*pedicat*) boys
> and fiercer than a husband's erection
> hacks eleven girls every day. . . .
> . . . .
> After these things [various manly exercises], when she's horny,
> she doesn't suck (*fellat*)—she thinks this unmanly (*parum virile*)—
> but simply devours the middles of girls.
> The gods give you back your mind, Philaenis,
> you who think that licking cunt is manly.

This is not a poem about "lesbianism." It is rather a mockery of the antitype, the category of the active woman. Philaenis exercises like a man, eats like a man, and drinks like a man (lines 4–12). These acts are only slightly less absurd than her wish to have sex like a man, that is, with both boys and girls. Like a man, she refuses to be passive/penetrated, whether vaginally, anally, or orally. In her twisted logic, says Martial, this leaves

only tribadism (a parody of vaginal intercourse), attempts at anal violation of boys, and oral sex, cunnilingus. What Philaenis fails to realize is that cunnilingus is equally passive, equally an act of being penetrated.

Deviate Sexual Acts and the Scale of Humiliation

Thus, contra Foucault, the Romans did indeed divide sexual acts into the approved and the forbidden.[18] Since a man is defined as a penetrator, there are exactly three things he can do sexually: he can penetrate someone (male or female) in the mouth, anus, or vagina. Equally, there are exactly three things he is forbidden to be: a *cinaedus*, a *fellator*, or a *cunnilinctor*. A woman, on the other hand, is forbidden to *act* at all—her only acceptable role is to be passive. And here we can see the massive power of the list, of systems of knowledge, for all other possible sexual activities become opaque to the culture. If "active" is defined as penetrating with a penis, "passive" is therefore any role that is not phallocentric, in which a man does not insert his penis in an orifice. Not only are being penetrated and servicing a woman orally passive, but any erotic activity that does not culminate in intercourse runs the danger of being labeled "passive" because someone is not being fucked. So Catullus (16) is attacked as a passive for confining his descriptions of sex to kissing. "Writing such soft stuff, Catullus must be soft himself, and sexually effeminate. Catullus threatens to prove his masculinity on them in person"[19] . . . *pedicabo ego vos et irrumabo*.

Further, contra Foucault (1986: 114–15), the Romans did not treat the *aphrodisia* as an aggregate. There is a demonstrable hierarchy in the desirability of each of the three sexual acts and in the degree of victimization that corresponds to it. The Roman created what we may call "the scale of humiliation": vagina, anus, mouth. Being fucked in the vagina is simply normal for a woman; it is not as degrading as being fucked in the anus. The most humiliating thing to suffer, as it is the most enjoyable to inflict, is to be fucked in the mouth.[20] For a man, any penetration is humiliating, but the same scale applies: being fucked in the anus is bad, more humiliating still is being fucked in the mouth.[21] Not only were some actions imposed and some forbidden, some were more forbidden than others.

Anomalous People and Willing Victims

Since every sexual act is based on the distinction between active and passive, every sexual act encodes power relations: dominator and dominated, each carries a burden of aggression or humiliation, power or powerless-

ness. The dominant ideology is the ideology of domination. Though a woman cannot be active, the act of penetration has not only literal but also symbolic and connotative meanings. The symmetry of the system demands that the slots for passive men and active women be filled in; the cultural schema demands antitypes. The grid accordingly constructs two monstrosities: the passive man and the active woman.

The active side is normal, that is, a *vir* will *futuere*, *irrumare*, and *pedicare* indiscriminately on whatever body he chooses. The category *vir* subsumes the labels *fututor*, *pedico*, and *irrumator* (see the table above). *Vir* exists as the level of emic, cultural type; that is, a *vir* may take pleasure in all of these actions. Similarly, in our culture, a heterosexual male may describe himself as an "ass-man" or a "leg-man" while still remaining a normal manly man.

On the other hand, each of the passive acts shows a distinct tendency to be objectified and embodied as a separate entity. Though the labels *cinaedus* and *pathicus* can subsume the other categories of passive male, there is also a distinctive sexual ontology of *pathicus/cinaedus* (anal), *fellator* (oral), and *cunnilinctor* (vaginal). Each of these will perform the actions of another, but each seems to have a stated preference. What remains constant, though, is the distinction between active and passive (Hallett 1989a: 223); a *cinaedus* cannot become a *pedico*, a *fellator* cannot become an *irrumator*, a *cunnilinctor* cannot become a *fututor*.

The reified victim (pathic male and even "normal female") is an object of contempt. Having been created, these creatures are then despised. Yet, in part to absolve the aggressors from guilt, the passive victim is rewritten as active: one who actively desires to be hurt, humiliated, fucked and fucked over. We see what we may call "the creation of the willing victim." Women enjoy being penetrated, enjoy being raped (Ov. *Ars Am.* 1.673: *grata est vis ista puellis*; Joshel 1992; Richlin 1992e), as do ontologically passive men. The *irrumatus* (grammatically passive) is a *fellator* (grammatically active), who enjoys being fucked in the mouth; the *pedicatus* is the *cinaedus*, who enjoys being fucked in the ass and will nearly commit rape in order to be raped (Petron. 21, 23–24). Similarly, the **fututus* is the *cunnilinctor*, who derives his sexual pleasure through his tongue. Thus, the passive orifices can be assimilated to a vision of oral aggression. "Hungry" vaginas can actively desire to be used (*Priapea* 83 Oxford). Anuses are voracious (Catull. 33.4; Mart. 2.51.6).

The Normal Male

We can begin by examining the unmarked cases: the active man (*vir*),[22] and the passive woman (*femina*). The normal man is constructed according to the Priapic model as delineated by Richlin (1992a). He will pene-

trate anyone in any hole; he takes pleasure; he seeks and hunts (Veyne 1985: 29). The *vir* is not the same thing as our "heterosexual," not least because a *vir* will have sex with (fuck) other males. This act violates our very definition of "heterosexual." More important still, to have sex with other males may be the *proof* of his status as a *vir*, a manly man. So Catullus 16 and the famous taunt of Valerius Asiaticus when accused of effeminacy (*mollitiam corporis*) by P. Suillius Rufus (Tac. *Ann.* 11.2.2): "Ask your sons, Suillius," he said, "they'll tell you I'm a man (*virum*)."

There may be men who are interested mostly in women, and it is possible to create nonce and humorous terms for them (*ancillariolus*, Mart. 12.58; *mulier-osus*, *-ositas*, Plaut. *Poenulus* 1303; Afranius *com.* 371; Cic. *Fat.* 10, *Tusc.* 4.25; Gell. 4.9.12; cf. *Anth. Pal.* 5.49), but none of these imply exclusive interest in women, and none are emic categories, that is, primary terms of the discourse. That a man is interested only in women does not define an ontological category; it is a personal idiosyncrasy. The emperor Claudius is possibly the only man singled out as exclusively interested in women in all of Roman history—even Ovid (*Ars Am.* 2.683–84) merely expresses a preference.[23] Suetonius writes, "He was of an extreme lust towards women, completely lacking in experience of males" (*libidinis in feminas profusissimae, marum omnino expers*, *Claud.* 33.2). The very vocabulary is significant. Suetonius cannot call Claudius a *vir*, not even *mulierosus*; these terms do not describe the exclusivity he finds remarkable. Suetonius has no word for "heterosexual"; it is not a category he can readily label. Instead he has to *describe* this peculiarity of taste to his readers.

Rome, then, totally ignores our distinction. And to call the Romans or Greeks "bisexual" just repeats the error (so Cantarella 1992). It's not that they fall on this side of the line, or that side, or in the middle. The point is that *the line doesn't exist.* We in turn completely ignore the Roman distinction. The active/passive distinction, though it has many emotional ramifications for us, does not determine sexual types. A man who practices cunnilingus (passive to the Romans) is still (by our definition) a heterosexual. A man who receives fellatio (active to the Romans) from another man is still (by our definition) a homosexual. The concepts of *vir* and "heterosexual" are structurally completely different.

The Normal Female

The normal woman is passive (Veyne 1985: 30). This is true on the most literal of levels. The good wife doesn't move (Lucr. 1268–77; Mart. 10.68.10; Plut. *Conjugal Precepts* 18). A wife who does is the subject of frequent jokes: she is an adulteress who has learned her moves elsewhere (Mart. 11.104, 7.18; Ov. *Am.* 1.10.36, 2.10.35; Tib. 1.9). The *femina* is penetrated in any hole; she gives pleasure; she is sought and hunted. And

here we can see clearly the anomalous nature of feminine sexuality in, as it were, action. The cultural equation of "passive" with "pathic" causes "normal" feminine sexuality to be viewed as contemptible (Richlin 1992a: 174). It also runs into practical difficulties, where it conflicts with the ambiguous desires of individual men. Not only do lovers (e.g., the elegiac poets) prefer sexually active, loving women to cold fish, but so do some husbands (e.g., Mart. 7.91; 10.35, 38 on the second Sulpicia; H.N. Parker 1992b; Hallett 1992b; Richlin 1992g). Feminine passion, to satisfy cultural expectations, must be simultaneously active (hence the sexual meaning of *morigera*, "actively pleasing the man," Adams 1982: 164) and passive, still under the control of the husband (Mart. 10.47.10). It is Plautus's Alcmene who strikes the mean; she prays for desire, but moderate desire (*sedatum cupidinem*, *Amph*. 840).

The Abnormal Male

Now let us look at the abnormal. The *pathicus* (passive man), as constructed at Rome, is the antitype to the *vir*, serving to define him. The *pathicus* inverts the values of the *vir*. He will desire to be penetrated. Now, just as the Roman classification recognizes nothing like our heterosexual, so it recognizes nothing like our homosexual. This is not to say that men who loved men exclusively might not have existed, though again they are surprisingly hard to find. Galba is about the only possible candidate. He, however, is an instructive case. Suetonius says of him, "In sexual matters, he was more inclined to males, and then none but the hardbodied and those past their prime" (*libidinis in mares pronior et eos non nisi praeduros et exoletosque*, *Gal.* 22). Note here that Galba is the active partner, not the passive; that even he has merely a *preference* for males; and that what is odd about him is a liking for adult men rather than soft boys. Suetonius, therefore, is not describing a "sexual orientation"; he is commenting on a peculiarity of taste on the part of a manly man. Galba appears to be the only case in Roman history where a man is specifically stated to prefer adult males. Galba may be the closest thing to a "homosexual" in our sense (Richlin 1993b: 532), but even so, to apply the term to him is misleading. Vergil, too, is a possible "homosexual" in our sense, though again, he is said merely to be *libidinis in pueros pronioris*, "sexually more inclined to boys" ([Suet.] *Verg*. 9), and the *Life* of Vergil records the rumor of an affair with Plotia Hieria, which she is said to have denied (10). That is, Vergil is described as a normal man in Roman terms, with an idiosyncratic preference for just one type of partner.

There indeed may have been men who were "homosexual" in our sense (primarily or exclusively attracted to men), but they would not have

known themselves to be such or have been recognized as such. Instead, those whom we label "homosexuals" would have been filed under the labels of either *viri*, "normal men" (such as Galba), or *pathici* (such as the objects of Martial's or Juvenal's scorn), entirely on the basis of what they did with those other men. The *pathicus*, then, was simply not our "homosexual"; the structural descriptions differ profoundly. Several features, which have generally been missed in previous discussions, make this clear.

First, there is no mutuality, no exchange of pleasures: a *pathicus* will never wish to *futuere*, *pedicare*, or *irrumare*; he will not even desire to have his penis touched.[24] He derives pleasure not through his penis, but solely from being used in his mouth or anus. The *pathicus*, if anything, approaches more closely our concept of the masochist than of the homosexual. Our phrases "love between men" or "same-sex love" imply a mutuality that is completely lacking from the Roman sexual scheme. Though an adult male could express love for a boy, in Roman culture a man penetrates another adult almost exclusively as a punishment or a mark of contempt.

Second, just as the *vir* is indifferent to the sex of the object he uses, so the *pathicus* is indifferent to the sex of the subject who uses him. The *pathicus* will delight not only in being the victim of men, being penetrated by a penis in the anus or mouth, but also in being the victim of women, primarily by providing cunnilingus but also by being used, as it were, as a dildo with his penis (Mart. 5.61). Martial (4.43) insists he did not call a man a *cinaedus*; he called him something worse, a cunt-licker (*cunnilingum*; and cf. 2.84). This is the point of Martial 10.40:

> Since people were always telling me
> that my Polla was spending time in secret with a *cinaedus*,
> I broke in on them, Lupus. He wasn't a *cinaedus*.

Perhaps few things show the differences between our sexual system and the Romans' more vividly than these three lines. For us the only "natural" deduction to be drawn is that the speaker found them having intercourse; if he's not a "homosexual," then he must be a "heterosexual." For Martial's audience the deduction is quite different. If he's not a *cinaedus* (someone who enjoys being fucked in the ass), then he must be "much worse" (Ker 1968, 2: 185). He could not have suddenly become active, and so could not possibly be having intercourse; instead, he's a *cunnilinctor*.[25]

The *pathicus* will not desire to penetrate, but he may be forced to do so by the raw facts of anatomy. Hence we find throughout Martial various jokes about passive men being forced by poverty or a type of oral impotence to have intercourse (Mart. 6.33, 11.85, 11.87; cf. esp. 11.47: cunnilingus in order to avoid intercourse).[26] Further, though this leads us off into gender roles rather than sex roles per se, the passive man is effemi-

nate in all the metaphorical senses. The man weak (as women are weak) in self-control, in resisting pleasures, will be pathic; the texts reveal a complex of overindulgence in wine, food, and sex. Thus, paradoxically from our point of view, the man obsessed with women is passive; hence the well-known picture of the *cultus adulter*, for whom we have our own curiously ambiguous phrase: "ladies' man."[27]

The *pathicus*, then, does not correspond to our society's construction of the "homosexual" at all. The two differ both etically (that is, their structural descriptions are markedly different) and emically (that is, they occupy different positions in a system of opposites). The two types do share certain features, but this is because each is the antitype of the unmarked normal "man." But just as the *vir* who has sex with boys (Tac. *Ann.* 11.2.2) or men (Catull. 16) to prove his manhood is hardly our heterosexual, so neither is the *cinaedus* our "homosexual." Naturally, if one wishes to be penetrated, a man's the best thing, and nobody gives humiliation like a man. But the *pathicus* violates our very definition for "homosexual," since he will be used by men and women indifferently.

Third, there is a point that I have not seen made in any discussion of ancient sexuality, though it raises itself instantly in the course of an anthropological survey. And this is simply that *cinaedi* do not have sex with *cinaedi*. In our system, "homosexuals" (by definition) have sex only with other "homosexuals." But *cinaedus* is not a reciprocal relation. *Cinaedi* have (or want to have) sex with normal men, with manly men. Two *cinaedi* in the Roman scheme is a ridiculous situation: two men, neither of whom wishes to penetrate. If there were men who loved other men, Rome would ask only, "Who's fucking whom?" (cf. the case of Galba above: he's the man). Thus the *cinaedus* simply does not correspond to our construction of the "homosexual." Nor does the Roman hatred of the *pathicus* correspond to "homophobia," though again they do share some features. Each is an expression of the fear and hate that the dominant group in any society expends on the "Other," the group or groups that define the power elite by negation and exclusion, whether the group exists (e.g., Jews) or not (e.g., witches; see below).

The Abnormal Female

In the same way, the active woman, the *virago*, *tribas*, or *moecha*, will invert the values of the *femina*. She will desire to penetrate, but cannot be truly (phallically) active. It is clear, then, that any woman who enjoys sex is by definition abnormal and masculine. The sexually active woman is the prostitute or the adulteress, who inverts the values of the society. She hunts and seeks out men to give her pleasure and uses them as toys. So the pictures of Sallust's Sempronia, or Cicero's Clodia or Sassia, or Ca-

tullus's Lesbia. Such a woman is a monster who violates boundaries. This is given an outward and visible symbolism in the *toga*, the sign that marked adulteresses and prostitutes. The role within the grid of this remarkable feature of Roman public semiotics is clear: the active (phallic) woman is denoted by male dress, marked out as one who crosses boundaries, as a violation of the norm.

The monstrous sexuality of the active woman is built on the model of aggressive male sexuality, to the point where the active woman may prefer a woman as victim. A woman cannot fuck a man except by forcing him into cunnilingus. Thus, even as there are no homosexuals, so the Roman sources know nothing of lesbians in our sense. Rather, they construct the *tribas*, the subject of an article by Judith Hallett (1989a, reprinted in this volume). The *tribades* practice a type of fake intercourse: either they rub their vulvas together or one uses a dildo on the other (Sen. *Controv.* 1.2.23; Mart. 1.90, 7.35, 7.67, 70; Juv. 6.304–13). Thus even *this* sexuality is phallocentric: we hear only once of licking (Mart. 7.67, quoted above); there is even an explicit denial of the practice (Juv. 2.47–48). We hear nothing of mutual masturbation. Rather, the women have to perform a parody of intercourse. Even when women become active, a woman is still the passive object of fucking.

Further, this monstrous sexuality has a physical incarnation. The sexually active woman (whether she seeks men or women) is endowed with a monstrous clitoris (*landicosa*, *CIL* 4.10004; *Priapea* 12.14; cf. the implications of Phaedrus 4.16.13). Their sex is masculinized: Juvenal's Messalina has a uterine hard-on (Juv. 6.129); Fulvia has a monstrous clitoris (*CIL* 11.6721.5; Hallett 1977). In Laqueur's phrase, "Destiny is anatomy" (1990: 25–62). The *pathicus* is only threatened with castration (Mart. 9.2.14); no doctor ever suggests castration as a cure for sexual excess or deficiency. But clitoridectomy is a carefully described operation to correct a phallic clitoris (Aët. 16.105; Paul of Aegina 6.70; Mustio 2.26). Systems of knowledge and power are inscribed not only with the pen but also with the scalpel.

Thus the Romans were not "before sexuality."[28] A man in active public life was under constant attack (and constantly attacking his enemies) as having been a *puer delicatus* as a youth, a *cinaedus* as an adult, a *cunnilinctor*, ruled by women, or a woman himself (Richlin 1992a: 97–98, 140; Edwards 1993: 63–97). Nor are women "before sexuality." The sexually active woman is a monster (Veyne 1985: 30, 33). She may escape censure only by being passive (or by a careful manipulation of the symbols of passivity; so Cornelia, "the Mother of the Gracchi"). Likewise, the active woman is under constant attack as man, whore, adulteress, or virago. The reverse is also true: the anomalous woman, the woman active in any sense, is attacked as sexually active and hence monstrous (Sempronia, Fulvia, Lesbia, Messalina), and this characterization serves to feminize her men.

Materiality

For Roman sexuality our only sources are public male posturings. Even elegy and epitaph fall into this category. We may never be able to recover the reality of what people did in the privacy of their rooms, much less what people felt in the privacy of their hearts. The public system of classification is purely a matter of matter; it has nothing to do with emotions, with affect, with love. It is concerned with bodies, with orifices, with power.

Yet such public systems of roles and expectations have enormous power to affect individuals, not only in how they act, but even in how they feel and conceive of themselves. We may not believe in or follow our society's script for male or female behavior—the readers of this collection are perhaps the least likely to do so—but it affects us all profoundly. A trivial example may show this best. Societal expectations not only guarantee I will never wear a dress, they guarantee I will never wear a *small watch*.

The *cinaedus*, it is clear, was good to think with. The category was useful as an antitype for delineating acceptable behavior and attacking enemies. The question now arises, was it anything more? In short, were there any *cinaedi*, really?

Three different questions are frequently mixed together when we look for gay people in antiquity (Boswell 1980; 1990a: 137 with n. 8), and they must be carefully distinguished. First: Did the concept/classification/category "homosexual," as we construct it, exist? Here, as I hope I have shown, the answer is simply, "No." The search for "gays" in antiquity is pointless. Equally, we must stop assuming that the main culture was "straight." To put the matter bluntly, heterosexuals have no claim on antiquity either. Second: Did "homosexual" men and women, as *we* define them, exist in antiquity? Here the answer is a highly qualified, "Yes." There were probably men and women primarily or exclusively attracted to the same sex. The point is that this fact was not particularly important, to them or to their society (Wiseman 1985: 10). Rather, depending entirely on what sexual acts they enjoyed with those of the same sex and how they enjoyed those acts, they were defined by their culture as normal or abnormal.

These first two questions mistakenly confuse our categories with those of Rome. However, a third question can still be meaningfully asked (Richlin 1993b). Not, "Did 'homosexuals' (as we define them) exist?" but "Did *cinaedi*, as the *Romans* defined them, exist?" That is, was there anybody there?

Our immediate answer is, "Of course, they existed." When Juvenal and others attacked *cinaedi*, they were attacking real people, not an anthropological abstraction. But this is not necessarily the case. Let's take the use-

ful example of the witch. In numerous societies (Medieval and Renaissance Europe, Navajo, Bantu), one can mock witches, warn people not to become witches, even kill people as witches, without the need for any real supernatural witches. We can restate the matter in terms of set theory. The set {*cinaedus*} clearly existed and was in constant use, but were there any members in the set? That is, were *cinaedi* antitypes like Jews, who, however misrepresented, do actually exist; or were they antitypes like witches, who, however often represented, do not?

When we ask the question, "Were there any real *cinaedi* in Rome?" we are asking about a stereotype, and the reality behind a stereotype, when we have nothing but the stereotype. The inquiry into materiality therefore must be formulated rigorously, for we are in constant danger of begging the question. If we ask, "Were there *cinaedi*?" we must also ask, "And in whose terms?" The answer to this, of course, is: "In the terms of those who control the discourse, the dominant group." If we ask, "Were there *cinaedi*?" we are employing a term defined by the power elite. So Richlin (1993b: 524) rightly defines *cinaedi* in normal Roman terms as "those who liked to be sexually penetrated by other men," and, I would add, sexually used by women (cf. ibid.: 533). We are asking, we are forced to ask (at least at first), "Were there really any men who depilated themselves, scratched their head with one finger," and all the other dead give-aways (Richlin 1992a: 258 n. 3). "Were there really men who enjoyed being humiliated, buggered, raped in the mouth, or faute de mieux, performing cunnilingus?" The answer, I think, is, "Yes." Some men like that did, perhaps, exist.

Thus when Richlin and others raise the question of the materiality of the *cinaedus*—and, let us not forget, the materiality of the normative *vir*, of the *femina*, and of the other categories as well—I think it likely that these roles did indeed affect behavior. For we are dealing here with the extraordinary power of cultural roles to mold individual actions. I think it extremely likely, therefore, that men avoided scratching their heads, so that others would not take them for *cinaedi*, and satire is full of secret *cinaedi* aping the signs of *viri*. For men doing exactly the opposite, a single example must suffice. Seneca, no friendly witness, provides a portrait of Mamercus Scaurus (*Ben.* 4.31.3–5; Richlin 1992a: 281–82):

> Didn't you know that he used to take the menstrual blood of his female slaves in his gaping mouth?[29] Did he even pretend it wasn't true? Did he even want to seem pure [i.e., orally uncontaminated]? I'll tell you his own story about himself, which I remember was being circulated and laughed at even when he was present. He had once used an obscene word to Annius Pollio, who was reclining at dinner, and then said that he was going to do what he preferred to suffer, and when he saw Pollio's frown, he said, "If I've said anything bad, on my own *head* be it!" He used to tell this story himself.

That is, Scaurus, in response to something Pollio had said, offhandedly remarked, "Fuck you."[30] He then changed it around by adding, "But I'd prefer you to fuck me." Here we have a picture of a man who is attacked as a *cunnilinctor*, and who presents himself as a *cinaedus*, who makes a joke of one of the worst of Roman insults. But we must remind ourselves, it is still a picture by an enemy. Men attacked their enemies as *cinaedi*. We have no words directly from anyone who identifies himself as a *cinaedus*.

Cultural types can and do influence behavior. Does this mean, however, that the constant depiction of *cinaedi* points to men who constantly depicted themselves as *cinaedi*? Does this qualify as a sub- or counterculture? I do not believe the evidence is sufficient to say, though the example of Scaurus points to a way in which the cultural type of the *cinaedus* might have been deployed for individual self-fashioning.[31]

Tacitus in Ohio

Let me make clearer the kinds of potential error that reoccur in discussing the sexualities of another culture and the materiality of a stereotype. An ancient ethnographer, Tacitus say, is transported here. He begins to describe our society, particularly our sexual customs. At first he is simply appalled. On our streets perverted *pathici* openly flaunt themselves, wearing T-shirts that boast of their disgusting oral submission to women ("Muff-Diving Instructor," "Free Mustache Rides"); they advertise their loathsome services in the personals columns of newspapers. Then he is bewildered. On the other hand, we treat as the vilest of criminals perfectly normal men whose only crime is the perfectly normal action of buggering boys. Some *pathici* we persecute, others we allow in public. Some *viri* we consider normal, others we incomprehensibly incarcerate.

Tacitus begins his fieldwork. He asks us, "Do you have any perverts?" We respond, "Yes." He then asks, "Are there men who like to be buggered?" Again, we respond, "Yes." He then records in his *de America* the presence of *cinaedi* and the universality of the active/passive split. This is the first error in fieldwork: assuming that the emic categories of your culture must be found everywhere. Later, however, he begins to realize that many of us, gay or straight (in our terms), are sometimes active and sometimes passive (in his terms). He will not, however, solve his problem by creating the additional category of "bi-actives." He has still utterly missed what makes a difference. If he insists that nevertheless everyone is "really" either active or passive, and that our categories of "homosexual" and "heterosexual" often filter or obscure information necessary to answer questions of interest to Roman researchers about sexual orientation, we will eventually get tired of trying to explain things to him.

Let us now suppose that after some time he finally realizes that his categories of *vir/cinaedus* do not match up with our categories "homo/heterosexual." He avoids falling into the ethnocentric error of assuming that his emic category of *cinaedus* is a human universal. So, as a good scholar, he asks, "Do you have any 'homosexuals'? By that I mean what your own primary sources reveal: men who want to be women, and have limp wrists and a cunning talent for interior decoration. Do you have any 'lesbians'? By that I mean diesel dykes, who think they can use their clitorises like penises," etc., etc. We would be forced to answer: "Yes. There actually are men and women who fit that description." And then we would add, "But really, it's just a stereotype."

And this raises the further question: Would we (gay or straight) recognize ourselves or assent to these descriptions, or would we not say, "I am not that name"? We may not know for certain if there were any *cinaedi*, in any terms, but we can use groups we do know exist. If an anthropologist asks of ancient Rome or modern America, using the terms of the dominant culture, "Were there 'women'? By which I mean sexually insatiable (or alternately frigid) air-heads, obsessed with clothes and gossip," etc., etc. (read Juvenal or watch television), we'd be forced to say: "Yes, there are such women, but I am not that name."[32] If she asks, "Were there any 'men'? By which I mean promiscuous, treacherous, rapists all" (read Ovid or watch television), we'd be forced to answer, "Yes, but I am not that name."

Thus "*cinaedus*" represents a real category, in that people were willing to assign others to it. We do not know if anyone called a *cinaedus* would have accepted that name, or how he would have acted. We know nothing of what "love between men" might have been. Our sources do not speak of love. And yet we must go beyond what we are told, even if (as in the case of Rome) it is only a single speculative step. We must become resisting readers.

Notes

1. In brief: emic (also called experience-near) categories in a culture correspond to the phon-*emic* level of analysis, vs. etic categories (experience-far), which correspond to the phon-*etic* level. Emic categories, like phonemes, are those which are of significance (literally make a difference) within the culture itself, specifically those systems of classification which are used to divide the universe of discourse. Much-studied examples are kinship, color, disease, and species terminologies. There are two important points. First, emic categories may differ greatly between cultures. For the Romans, *patruus* and *avunculus* are emic terms; "uncle" is not. Second, within an individual culture, emic terms occupy a higher level in the organization. In our own sexual system, "heterosexual" and "homo-

sexual" are emic terms; "ass-man" or "leg-man" are not. For this important distinction, see Pike 1967 and Holland and Quinn 1987. In this article, I will be outlining Roman *emic* concepts, that is, the discourse of the culture as a whole. A history of exceptions, reactions, and rebellions can only be written against the background of this system.

2. Foucault 1980; Greenberg 1988; Halperin 1990a; McWhirter, Sanders, and Reinisch 1990. J. Katz 1995 is especially refreshing.

3. Gender may not appear at all, or only as a secondary feature. Even when it does, the axis of same vs. other may be irrelevant to the definition of sexual categories. See Herdt [1981] 1994, 1982, 1984 (with Whitehead 1985); Gilmore 1990, esp. 146–68 and 201–19.

4. Martin and Voorhies 1975: 84–107.

5. Housman 1931: 408 n. 1 (= 1972: 1180 n. 2); Dover 1978: 16, 81–91, 168–70; 1984: 143–57, esp. 148–49; Richlin 1992a, esp. 131–39; Veyne 1985: 26, 29–30; Foucault 1985: 46, 84–86, 210–11; Wiseman 1985: 10–13. Even Boswell: "This 'penetration code' . . . was clearly not related to a dichotomy of sexual preference, but to issues of power, dominance, and submission" (1990b: 72).

6. E.g., Veyne 1985: 30.

7. A failure consistently to make the vital distinction between active and passive severely weakens the usefulness of many works, including Boswell 1980; MacMullen 1982; Lilja 1983; Rousselle 1988, 1989; Cantarella 1988, 1992. Richlin 1983 forms the basis for this and all subsequent studies.

8. E.g., Carrier 1980, 1995; Fry 1985; Lancaster 1988; R. Parker 1985; Tapinc 1992; W. Williams 1986.

9. A point already made by Kinsey, Pomeroy, and Martin 1948: 656.

10. So Boswell 1990b: 76–77: "These primary modern rubrics [hetero- vs. homo-] were of little import or interest to ancient and medieval writers, and the categories the latter employed (e.g., active/passive; sinful/holy) often filter or obscure information necessary to answer questions of interest to modern researchers about sexual 'orientation.'" Boswell assumes that "sexual orientation" (i.e., our hetero- vs. homo-) is a natural given and seems peeved at the ancients for not knowing what they really meant.

11. Wiseman 1985: 10–13, for a beautifully succinct statement.

12. I.e., a "kisser" is not a separate sexual being on the same level as a *fututor*, any more than "breast-man" is a category to rank with "heterosexual."

13. An observation of Judith Hallett and Marilyn Skinner; see also *Oxford Latin Dictionary* s.v. 3a; H. N. Parker 1993: 321.

14. Varro *Sat. Men.* 205; Sall. *Cat.* 13.3; Cic. *Phil.* 2.86; Tac. *Ann.* 11.36.5; Petron. 9.6; *Priapea* 45; Sen. *Ben.* 4.31.4; *Dig.* 3.1.1.6 (Ulp.); see Richlin 1992a: 14; Adams 1982: 189–90.

15. Contra Adams 1982: 120–22; see Hallett 1983: 106. The sense of power is never wholly absent, and is often primary.

16. Hor. *Sat.* 1.2.132–33; Mart. 2.49, 2.60, 9.67; Apul. *Met.* 9.27–28; with a radish or fish: Catull. 15.19; Juv. 10.314–17; cf. Richlin 1992a: 215.

17. Cf. the jokes and innuendoes in Cic. *Dom.* 25, 47, 83, where Clodia uses Cloelius as an oral dildo; Richlin 1992a: 99.

18. Foucault 1985: 53, 92–93, 114 (cf. 38, 138); 1986: 124; H. N. Parker 1992a: 97–98.

19. Wiseman 1985: 123; see Fitzgerald 1992.

20. Cf. *Priapea* 35; Mart. 4.50, 9.4, 9.40, 9.67, 11.40, 11.46, 12.79. For fellatio as especially the job of a slave or prostitute, cf., for example, in literature: Mart. 3.75, 9.4, 11.40, 11.61.5, 12.55; Lucil. 334–35 (Marx); *Anth. Pal.* 11.328.9–10; and in real life: *CIL* 4.1969 (Diehl 467), 2028, where the price is specified, or 4.2259, 2268, 2273, 2275, 2278, from a brothel, etc. Cf. also, where the social status of the woman is not directly stated: Mart. 1.72, 1.94, 4.50, 4.84, 8.87, etc.; *CIL* 4.1388, 1389 (Diehl 657), 1510, 2292 (Diehl 658), 4192 (*fellatrix*); 1427 (Diehl 660), 1651, 2402, 2403, 2421, 4158, 4185 (Diehl 659), 4434, 5095, etc. (*fellare*); 1425 (Diehl 649) (*lingit*).

21. *Priapea* 35, 44; Mart. 2.84, 9.4, 9.40, 11.40, 11.43, 11.45–46, 12.35, 12.85 (also Gallus *Anth. Pal.* 5.49; Dio Cass. 62.13.4; Suet. *Ner.* 35.4; see MacMullen 1982: 492–93 and n. 27; Veyne 1985: 30–31).

22. E.g., Mart. 7.58.10; Suet. *Vespasian* 13. See Walters, this volume.

23. Suetonius does not consider this a mark in Claudius's favor. Clodius Albinus is a similar case; S.H.A. *Clod.* 11.7 merely says *aversae veneris semper ignarus et talium persecutor*, "He was always ignorant of the back-to-front Venus [anal intercourse] and a persecutor of such."

24. The only cases I know of where there is said to be turnabout are Suet. *Calig.* 36.1 and perhaps Sen. *Ep.* 99.13 (Richlin 1993b: 540).

25. Rightly Richlin 1992a: 246 n. 36 (as against 222 with 258 n. 6). See also Veyne 1985: 33. The same joke is behind Mart. 12.38 (contra Shackleton Bailey 1993, 2: 363).

26. Mart. 7.58 (Galla, who keeps marrying her *cinaedi*), and cf. also cases of *pueri delicati* forced to service both master and mistress: Mart. 6.39.13–14, the pictures of Giton (e.g., Petron. 24, 108, 113), and Trimalchio himself (63.3, 69.3, 75.11). Further, it is a common joke that the chief of such services will be cunnilingus; cf. Mart. 3.81, 4.43, 11.47; cf., too, Auson. *Epigrams* 78 (cited above).

27. The phrase is Ovid's (*Tr.* 2.499); see Richlin 1992a: 136–39; Foucault 1985: 84–86; H. N. Parker 1992a: 98–99. Cf. the portraits at Mart. 3.63, 10.65; Juv. 6.*O*.1–34; Lucil. 1058 (Marx): *barbati moechocinaedi*; Petron. 126–27 (Encolpius as a male prostitute for women); and Mart. 7.58, 9.2 (where the man who is totally ruled by his mistress is a pathic who ought to be castrated), 10.40, 10.65, 12.34, 12.49 (a troop of *cinaedi* in the service of a woman).

28. Foucault 1980: 105–7, 152–53, 156; 1985: 1–6; Halperin, Winkler, and Zeitlin 1990b: 5–6; Gleason 1990, esp. 390 n. 2, 411–12.

29. Note that the purpose of cunnilingus is not the pleasure of the woman but the humiliation of the performer, increased by the fact that he is humiliating himself with his slaves.

30. What he probably said was *te irrumabo*, "I'll fuck you in the mouth" (Richlin 1992a: 281–82).

31. See also Barton 1994.

32. Richlin (1993b: 531 and n. 22) points out the parallelism of the problems of definitions of *cinaedus* and "woman," citing Riley 1988.